

The Anchorage Amateur Radio Club News Bulletin

February 1997

Editor - Harvey E. Rookus NL7DK

Vol. 26 No. 2

General Meeting

February 7, 1997

"The Operations of the
911 system used in Emergency Services"

by Lt. Cole, APD

Note The AARC Board Meeting will be held on the second Wednesday,
February 12th, in Room 150 Grant Hall, APU.
Grant Hall is the first building on the left as you enter the Campus.

What's Up?

General Meeting First Friday of Month - Carr-Gottstein Bldg APU Campus 7 pm
Second Bldg on the left.

Board Meeting - Second Wednesday 7 pm - Grant Hall APU Room 150
VEC Testing - 1st Wed 6:30 pm, Carr-Gottstein Bldg.; 2nd Saturday, 2 pm Hope
Cottage - 530 W. International Airport Rd. Enter Rear of Bldg.

3rd Wednesday, VFW Hall - Eagle River 7 pm
No appointment needed. Bring copies of previous testing. Bring Photo ID.

AARC GENERAL MEETINGS are held on the first Friday evening of each month in the Carr-Gottstein Bldg. Alaska Pacific University Campus. The campus is located at 4101 University Drive and Bragaw St. Parking is available in the lot East of the building. The meetings begin at 7:00 PM and visitors are always welcome! The AARC legendary raffle is open to everyone!

AARC BOARD MEETINGS are held on the 2nd Wednesday evening of the month in Room 104 of the Carr Gottstein Building on the APU campus. The meetings begin at 7:00 PM and are open to all club members and visitors.

ANCHORAGE ARES NET The Anchorage area Amateur Radio Emergency Services Net is held each Thursday evening at 8:00 PM on the KL7ION repeater on 147.30 (+.600). Net control is Lil Marvin, NL7DL and alternate NCS is KL7IO. The Westlink Amateur Radio report, Swap N Shop and the PARKA Net follow the ARES Net on the same frequency.

THE KL7AA REPEATERS sponsored by the club are as follows:

KL7AA 146.94 (-.600) 100.0 or 141.3Hz tone. Anchorage area * + number for patch # to hang up. (5 min time limit)

Patch on 0600 - 2200 daily, 0700 - 2359 Fri/Sat, 0700 - 2200 Sundays. Emergency autodial enables 24 hrs a day. Emergency autodial numbers (10 minute resettable timer)

911 for life or death
912 Anch Police Dispatch
913 AK State Trooper Dispatch

hangs up Emergency numbers also

KL7AA 146.76 (-.600) 141.3HZ tone Mt. Alyeska, and Girdwood areas.

KL7AA 224.94 (-1.6) NO TONE Anchorage area. KL7AA 444.70 (+5.0) 100.0Hz tone Anchorage area. Patch enabled 24 hour a day. * + number for patch # hangs up patch. (5 minute time limit) Emergency autodial enabled 24 hours a day. (10 minute resettable timer).

911 Life or death
912 Anch Police Dispatch
913 AK State Trooper Dispatch

hangs up Emergency numbers also.

A reminder that not only is using an Amateur phone patch system to bypass the Long Distance carrier illegal, it can result in the loss of the entire phone patch system. Prefix's outside the Anchorage dialing area are disabled.

The repeater Trustee is William Reiter, KL7ITI. Doug Dickenson, KL7IKX is chairman of the UHF/VHF committee.

KL7AA PACKET OPERATIONS The KL7AA Packet BBS. Callsign of the PBBS is KL7AA-7 (ANCBBS). Callsigns of the multi-frequency switch are KL7AA-8 (AARC), KL7AA-7 & KL7AA-8, and operate on user frequencies of: 145.010 and 147.960 (147.960 is the statewide ADES provided backbone). Linking from 145.050, and 440.050 is provided through multi-frequency switches throughout the city.

KL7AA operates a high power Node switch on 145.01 from the Rabbit Creek area, with the callsign of KL7AA-1 (Anc), as well as a Node switch on the top of the ARCO Building in downtown Anchorage, on 145.050 KL7AA-5 (Anc5)

KL7AA also operates an HF Gateway with the callsign of KL7AA-10 (HF80) on 3.605 Mhz. This gateway has access to all local and stateside networks.

The AARC sponsors an Amateur ↔ Internet Gateway station, NL7NC-9 (AKGATE). This gateway is available from any of the local Node stations on 145.01, 145.05, 440.050, or 147.960.

A reminder that 147.960 is the state sponsored ADES backbone link connecting Fairbanks, Anchorage, Homer, Kodiak and Juneau together. User access for keyboard to keyboard activity is best accomplished between 1600 and 2200 daily, during this time, the Packet BBS stations will hold off from heavy bulletin forwarding.

ALL PBBS AND USER ACTIVITY IS SECONDARY TO EMERGENCY REQUIREMENTS OF THE ALASKA DIVISION OF EMERGENCY SERVICES (ADES).

AARC 'HomePage On Internet'

<http://www.alaska.net/~lawson/aarc.html>

Ham Radio Luncheon
Every Tuesday
Royal Fork near Dimond
Center on Old Seward
11:30 'til 1:00

Let's all be responsible!

You say your Amateur License is important to you?

Fair Warning: Mail sent to amateurs that is returned to the Commission marked Address Unknown, Forwarding Expired, etc., is grounds for revocation of your Amateur Radio License.

If your address on your ticket is not the same as your present address, get a 610 form to submit to the FCC for an address change.

Request a 610 form from the FCC at this toll free number: (800) 418-3676. For customer assistance, dial (800) 322-1117 from 8 am-4:30pm ET Monday-Friday. The above taken from: Handi-Ham World.

The Anchorage Amateur Club Radio News Bulletin is the monthly newsletter of the Anchorage Amateur Radio Club. Permission is granted for reproducing articles appearing in the Anchorage Amateur that do not indicate a copyright separate from the Anchorage Amateur Radio Club. Letters to the Editor and articles for publication should be submitted to Harvey Rookus, NL7DK, 3310 Checkmate Drive, Anchorage 99508. Telephone number (907) 333-4693. E-Mail 73521.3316 Articles and Notices for the paper should be typewritten or on IBM compatible formatted computer disks (3.5 inch). Deadline for articles is the 20th of the month.

President's Corner
Rob Wilson, AL7KK

During 1997 there are a lot of very interesting things we at AARC can do. Here are some of my thoughts. You may have more, and I will be very interested to hear them.

Contests... What contests are coming up? Maybe we can plan ahead a bit and some of us can find out how to win, or at least win the Alaska part of the contest! Maybe we can get some of our best Alaska contestants to help us with ideas and plans. Certainly, we in this area could put a big dent in the Field Day Contest with just a little more pre-planning.

Emergencies... I once heard a geologist speak about earthquakes along the Pacific Plate. He calculated that each large block averaged a major earthquake about every 35 years. 1997 is 33 years since the last Big One! Are we ready?

Radio equipment... There are some real skookum pieces of gear coming on the market. For example, I just acquired a micro high frequency rig that covers the whole H.F. band! Then there are computers that will clean up the audio on your radio, and other computer programs that will receive CW, teletype, Amtor, slow scan TV, and other stuff on your desk top computer for practically no further cost. We need some speakers to tell us about the latest, best, most fun, and cleverest.

Travel... Alaskan hams are World Renowned for their exotic, strange, and exciting adventures. Do you know of anyone who would like to come in and tell us about their remarkable adventures, past or present?

Technical stuff... Another thing we are well known for is a special brand of enthusiasm about technical things. We have had great speakers in the past and some clever things in our paper. But, we need more. Maybe we could even have two short talks in an evening. Just think of all the topics like: really neat antennas, satellites, computers and ham radio, how to build a cheap workbench, better more reliable repeaters, how electronics heals or helps people, a super widget to confuse and amuse, and there are ten thousand more topics.

Laws... We live in a sea of them, and we need to keep up to date. If necessary we need to try and change laws... just think about the restrictive antenna ordinances we almost had!

Questions... What does a new ham need to know? What is an "Elmer", can I be one, or can one help me? What kind of antenna is best for _____ (fill in the blank). How little power can I use? Can I run an entire station on solar power in the Arctic?

Anyway there are a lot of interesting things to do in the 50th year of The Anchorage Amateur Radio Club. Talk to our club entertainment chairman, Peter, WL7BW, about speakers or plans to do things. Let's have the greatest year yet! ...73...

The country's busiest hot line is giving some of us the busy signal

911 BECOME A HOT LINE

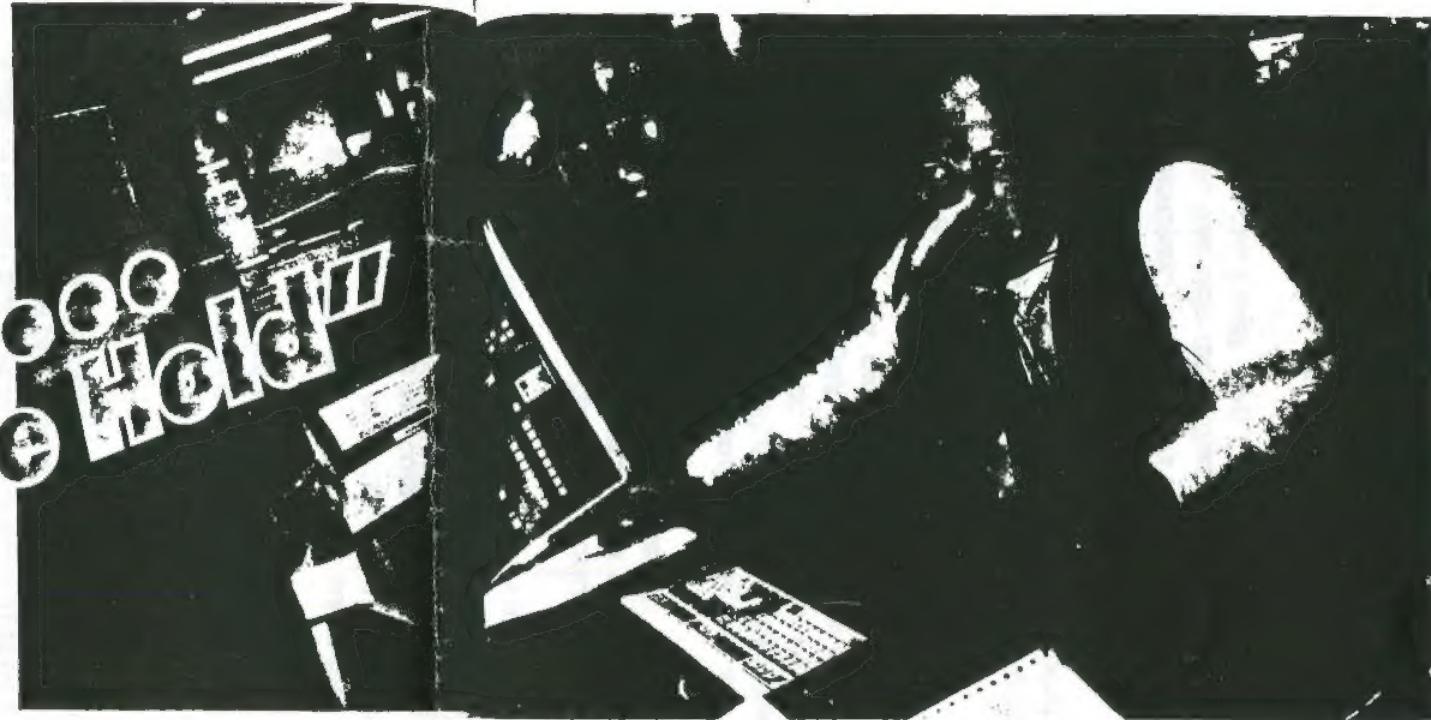
From U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT
GORDON WITKIN AND
MONIKA GUTTMAN

IN A DISMAL SUBTERRANEAN pressure cooker four floors beneath Los Angeles's City Hall East, dispatcher Martin Ford listens over his headset as a caller screams that somebody has just shot at him. "Okay, where's the man with the gun now, sir?" Ford asks matter-of-factly. The caller's location, a phone booth, pops up on the computer screen. Ford types, then pushes a button, assigning an available police car to the case. Moments later, Ford takes the next call: a woman who fears an intruder is in her house.

In Los Angeles, Baltimore, Chicago and Buffalo—and perhaps in your community—the calls keep coming and

the lights never stop blinking. A fight. A suspected shoplifter. Eighteen junkies in an alley with a drug dealer. An elderly lady needing her pills.

Police officials call it the "tyranny of 911"—the relentless drumbeat of calls that sends cops bouncing all over town like so many pinballs. The 911 system, which covers some 85 percent of the U.S. population, regularly works in heroic fashion. But the sheer volume of calls sometimes overwhelms 911 operators and phone lines, meaning desperate callers sometimes get a recording or are put on hold. During a Dallas storm in the spring of 1995, hundreds had to wait more than 90 seconds before being helped. And



in Los Angeles last year, 325,261 calls—13.5 percent of the total—were abandoned before operators could answer.

The vast majority of 911 calls are handled efficiently and courteously, but recent years have seen more than enough horror stories to cause concern. Perhaps the most infamous occurred on November 11, 1994, in Philadelphia, when more than 20 calls were made to 911 to report a fight among rival groups of teens. People who called to plead for help found 911 operators curt and hostile. "Don't talk to me like that," barked one dispatcher to an angry, frightened caller. "I asked you a question." Police did not arrive for 45 minutes. By then,

16-year-old Eddie Polec, his head crushed by a baseball bat, lay dying on the steps of a church.

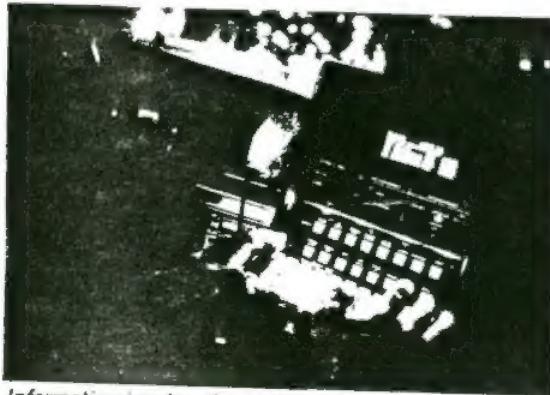
Six dispatchers were fired or suspended in the wake of the incident, but their penalties were later reduced or overturned by an arbitrator. Since that night, the question keeps popping up: was Philadelphia's 911 system an accessory to Polec's murder?

Like so many other problems, 911 started out as a solution. In 1967 a Presidential commission recommended that a single number be established nationwide for reporting emergencies. The first 911 call was made in Haleyville, Ala., in February 1968. Since then, the number of calls

READER'S DIGEST • NOVEMBER 1996

nationwide—summoning police, ambulances and fire departments—has mushroomed to an estimated 268,000 a day, or 98 million a year.

Meanwhile, the proliferation of cellular phones has created a host of new challenges. In 1994, they accounted



Information is relayed to police patrol cars.

for 18 million additional 911 calls. Cellular phones don't provide the caller's location and number the way calls from wire-line phones do. Paricked callers often have trouble describing their location, and hang-up calls can't be relocated. In addition, the routing technologies of cellular systems may send a call to the wrong dispatching center.

All these issues load more responsibility on 911 dispatchers, who are sometimes poorly trained and often overworked and overstressed. Barbara Stone, a senior police service representative in Los Angeles, admits there are times she can't shake off the pain. "A guy came home from work, and he had left his daughter

home alone," she says, her eyes growing moist as she recalls a call made years ago. "She was maybe 11 or 12. He came home and somebody had stabbed her to death." Stone pauses. "See?" she says, choking back a cry. "That one still gets me."

Salaries for dispatchers frequently don't exceed the low-\$20,000 range, and turnover is high. Two years ago an investigation by Chicago's Better Government Association found ten 911 dispatchers sleeping on the job.

Slowly, some of these problems are being addressed. The National Emergency Number Association is working to standardize training for dispatchers. New systems

designed to expand capacity and reduce stress have been set up in Chicago, New York and Atlanta.

Another major problem with the system is that an increasing percentage of 911 calls do not fit anyone's definition of an emergency. As a result, life-threatening situations do not always get the prompt attention they deserve. An audit after Eddie Polec's death found that Philadelphia's system was being drained by requests for hospital transportation, abandoned-vehicle reports and other nonemergency calls.

In some places 90 percent of the calls are for nonemergencies. In Columbus, Ohio, for example, people want to know kickoff times for Ohio State University football games. In Los Ange-

les, says frustrated Police Chief Willie Williams, 911 callers ask "for directions to Disneyland. They'll ask what are the best seats at Dodger Stadium."

On a busy night in Los Angeles, legitimate callers may have to wait two or three hours for police to respond to nonemergency calls. People will tell dispatchers that someone has a gun, even if it's not true, so police will respond more quickly. Such gamesmanship increases both police and citizen jeopardy, says Sgt. William Suddeth: "If police see the caller reaching into his pocket, say, to get his driver's license, there could be a shooting, all because of a radio call."

Cops admit they're partly to blame because they sold 911 so aggressively, didn't teach the public how to use it and went out of their way to respond to all calls, emergency or not. "There was a failure on everybody's part to anticipate the downsides," says Joseph Brann, who runs the Justice Department's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services.

The larger questions are: how to wean the public off frivolous 911 calls, weed out nonemergencies, service the public in ways other than rapid response, and give cops more time to work with neighborhoods in really fighting crime. Many law-enforcement officials have even begun to question the foundation on which 911 was built—the idea that police can stop crimes by responding rapidly to citizens' "emergency" calls.

Landmark research published in 1981 found that 50 to 90 percent of the calls in which officers are dis-

"911... PLEASE HOLD"

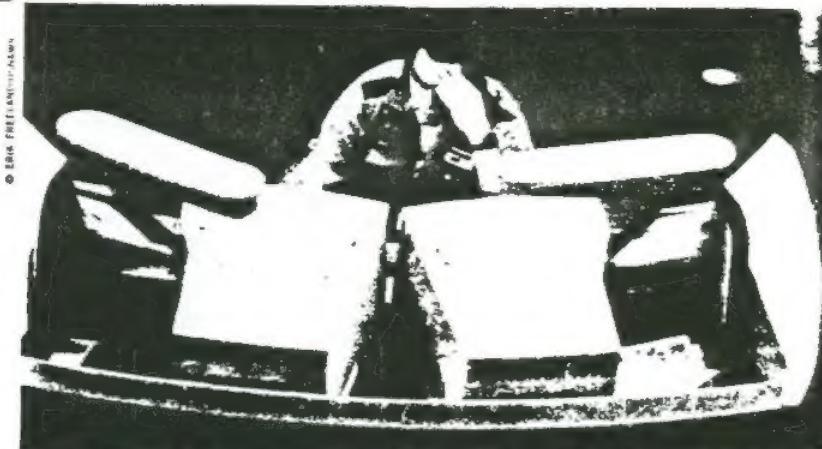
patched are not about crime. And rapid police responses led to arrests in only three percent of serious reported crimes.

Nevertheless, in many cities, response time is still considered the test of a police department's effectiveness. People want quick responses, and the press often focuses on the issue. The result is that 911 dominates the operations of most of America's police departments.

"The equation is simple," write Harvard's David Kennedy, Mark Moore and Malcolm Sparrow in their book, *Beyond 911: A New Era for Policing*. "The more officers a department reserves to answer 911 calls, the swifter and more sure the emergency response, but the fewer people and less time left for doing anything else, such as foot patrol, neighborhood organizing, crime prevention and the like."

Some police departments are trying different tactics to achieve a new goal: differential response. In this system, nonemergency 911 calls—minor theft or nuisance reports, for instance—are siphoned off to special phone units staffed by civilians or officers on injury status. In Baltimore, calls about indecent exposure, larceny, animal disturbances, gambling and loitering are referred to the telephone reporting unit if the incidents are not in progress, no suspect is on the scene and no one is hurt. The number of calls handled by the phone unit rose from 13,911 in 1987 to 55,822 in 1995.

Another approach stresses new, easy-to-remember phone numbers for nonemergency calls. Most police



"Since it's so easy to remember, people call 911 for anything," says one ex-cop.

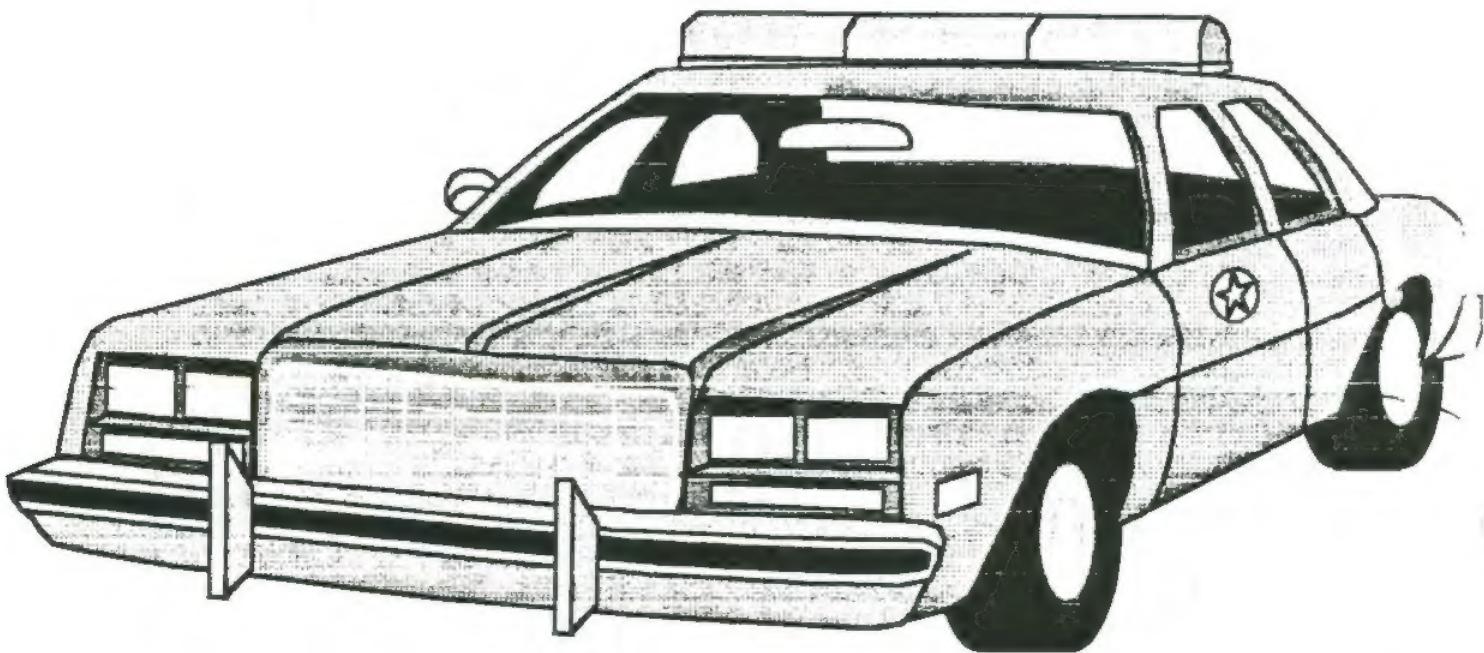
departments have nonemergency numbers, but they've rarely been marketed as aggressively because so much of the focus has been on 911. Buffalo inaugurated a new, nonemergency number this summer, hiring a local advertising agency to launch the effort by using a sequence of rhyming slogans: "For real emergencies call 911; we'll quickly send

someone! Nonemergencies, it's 853-2222, and we'll tell you what to do!"

Cops agree they've got to find some way to break the tyranny of 911. But no one watching the blinking lights thinks that will be easy. "Nine-one-one is almost like heroin," says communications Sgt. Louis Hopson of the Baltimore PD. "It's easier to get people on it than off."



The above article is with the Permission of
Reader's Digest



Late Flash

Thanks to World Radio

FCC extends transition on RF radiation rules

The Commission has amended its rules to extend the transition period for applicants and station licensees to determine compliance with the new requirements for evaluating the environmental effects of radiofrequency (RF) electromagnetic fields from FCC-regulated transmitters....

The American Radio Relay League, Inc., Ameritech Mobile Communications, Inc., AT&T Wireless Services, Inc., BellSouth Corporation, Paging Network, Inc., the Personal Communications Industry Association and US West filed petitions asking the Commission to extend the transition period beyond 1 January 1997, arguing that the existing transition period failed to provide adequate time for affected parties to achieve compliance with the new rules.

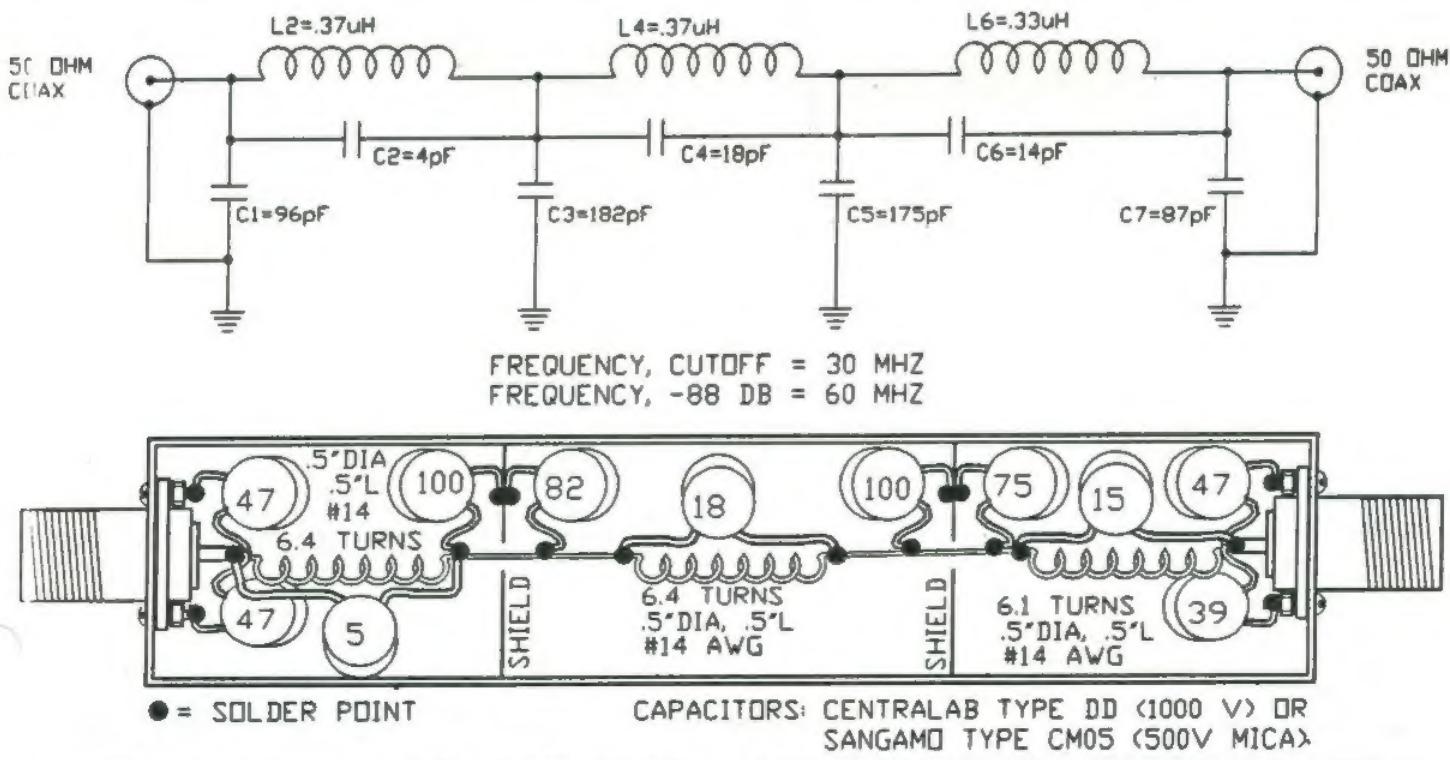
The Commission stated that, based on the petitions and comments, it is clear that most station applicants will need additional time to determine that they comply with the new requirements.

The Commission noted that an extension of the transition period would: 1) eliminate the need for the filing and granting of individual waiver requests; 2) allow time for applicants and licensees to review the results of the decisions that will be taken in the near future addressing other issues raised in petitions; and 3) permit applicants to review a revised information bulletin and make the necessary measurements or calculations to determine that they are in compliance.

The Commission indicated that

it did not concur with petitioners who suggest that granting any extension of the transition period will have significant adverse effects on public health.

Therefore, the Commission has extended the transition period to 1 September 1997, for most radio services. For the Amateur Radio Service, the transition period has been extended to 1 January 1998. Additionally, the Commission will allow changes to amateur radio operator license examinations to be made as the examinations are routinely revised between now and 1 July 1998. The Commission believes that these extensions are necessary so that applicants and licensees will have adequate time to understand the new requirements and to ensure that their facilities are in compliance with them. (FCC 96-487)



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WHAT'S COMING NEXT MONTH?

FOR SALE

220 Larson Whip Antenna with Resonator; Spider HF Antenna, All Bands 80-10 Meters; Contact Ed NL7VP @ 243-4348H or 249-3151W

FOR SALE

Kenwood TS-50S, new in the box. \$800 OBO. Uniden Bearcat BC100 XLT hand-held Scanner with carrying case. \$50. Contact Bob NL7HT at 656-1488 or leave message on recorder.

FOR SALE

AEA Pakratt PK 232 with Manuals, cables etc. \$100 OBO Contact Harry NL7DK 333-4693

The Serialized story of the

1964 Earthquake

by

George Sharrock - NB4U

